DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 268 575 CS 209 720

AUTHOR	Holbrook, Hilary Taylor, Comp.
TITLE	An Exemplary High School Literary Magazine: "Ragnaroc X."
INSTITUTION	ERIC Clearinghouse on Reading and Communication Skills, Urbana, Ill.
SPONS AGENCY	Office of Educational Research and Improvement (ED), Washington, DC.
PUB DATE	[86]
CONTRACT	400-83-0025
NOTE	49p.; Cover of magazine removed due to poor reproducibility. Photographs may not reproduce well. For other magazine profiles in series, see CS 209 701-719.
AVAILABLE FROM	St. Pius X Catholic High School, 2674 Johnson Rd., N.E., Atlanta, GA 30345 (Magazine only--profile not included--$6.00 including postage).
PUB TYPE	Reports - Descriptive (141)
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	Competition; Course Content; *Creative Writing; *Evaluation Methods; Faculty Advisers; High Schools; Periodicals; Production Techniques; Student Evaluation; *Student Publications; Teacher Role; Writing Evaluation; Writing for Publication
IDENTIFIERS	*Exemplars of Excellence; *Literary Magazines; National Council of Teachers of English

ABSTRACT

One of a series of 20 literary magazine profiles written to help faculty advisors wishing to start or improve their publication, this profile provides information on staffing and production of "Ragnaroc X," the magazine published by St. Pius X High School, Atlanta, Georgia. The introduction describes the literary magazine contest (and criteria), which was sponsored by the National Council of Teachers of English and from which the 20 magazines were chosen. The remainder of the profile--based on telephone interviews with the advisor, the contest entry form, and the two judges' evaluation sheets--discusses (1) the magazine format, including paper and typestyles; (2) selection and qualifications of the students on staff, as well as the role of the advisor in working with them; (3) methods used by staff for acquiring and evaluating student submissions; (4) sources of funding for the magazine, including fund raising activities if applicable, and production costs; and (5) changes and problems occurring during the advisor's tenure, and anticipated changes. The May 1984 issue of the magazine is appended. (HTH)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)
X This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.
☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.
• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

ED268575

AN EXEMPLARY HIGH SCHOOL LITERARY MAGAZINE: RAGNAROC X

Compiled by

Hilary Taylor Holbrook

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY
Charleen Klisten
TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

INTRODUCTION

In 1984, the National Council of Teachers of English began a national competition to recognize student literary magazines from senior high, junior high, and middle schools in the United States, Canada, and the Virgin Islands. Judges in the state competitions for student magazines were appointed by state leaders who coordinated the competition at the state level.

The student magazines were rated on the basis of their literary quality (imaginative use of language; appropriateness of metaphor, symbol, imagery; precise word choice; rhythm, flow of language), types of writing included (poetry, fiction, nonfiction, drama), quality of editing and proofreading, artwork and graphic design (layout, photography, illustrations, typography, paper stock, press work), and frontmatter and pagination (title page, table of contents, staff credits). Up to 10 points were also either added for unifying themes, cross-curricular involvement, or other special considerations, or subtracted in the case of a large percentage of outside professional and/or faculty involvement.

In the 1984 competition, 290 literary magazines received ratings of "Above average," 304 were rated "Excellent," and 44

CS 209 720

earned "Superior" ratings from state contest judges. On the basis of a second judging, 20 of the superior magazines received the competition's "Highest Award."

As a special project, the ERIC Clearinghouse on Reading and Communication Skills has selected 20 magazines from those receiving "Superior" ratings to serve as models for other schools wishing to start or improve their own student literary magazines. The profiles of these magazines are based on the faculty advisor's contest entry sheet, the judges' evaluation sheets, and interviews with the faculty advisors. Where possible, the magazines themselves have been appended. Information for ordering copies of the magazines is contained at the end of each profile.

RAGNAROC X

St. Pius X Catholic High School

Atlanta, Georgia

Principal: Reverend Terry Young

Faculty Advisor: Charleen Klister

Student Editor: Patrick Brisbane

> Rag na rok/'rag-na-rak/n [Old Norse ragna rok, Twilight of the Gods]: the cataclysmic recreation of the the earth; formation of a completed whole from discordant parts.

St. Pius X Catholic High School is a four-year school located on the outskirts of Atlanta. Its 853 students are drawn from a six county area, and from a variety of economic and racial backgrounds. St. Pius has published its student art and literary magazine, Ragnaroc X, for 15 years, and according to Charleen Klister, the faculty advisor, "the definition of 'Ragnaroc' on the title page describes the staff's spirit as well as the artistic process and the finished magazine."

THE MAGAZINE FORMAT: A COMPLETED WHOLE

Printed on white linen paper and white linen cover stock with center-staple, Ragnaroc X measures 11 x 8 1/2 inches wide, and has 40 pages. The cover is embossed with a female profile. The air brush and pen original of this illustration appears in

the magazine as well. The magazine's name appears in black 72 point Linotext typeface. Ms. Klister, the magazine advisor, notes that the embossed illustration is one of only a few in Ragnaroc's 15 year history: most often the cover is plain, with raised title.

The text within is printed in 12 point Aldus typeface with 32 point titles. Authors are in 8 point Aldus italic, and short stories have 30 point initial caps at new paragraphs. The magazine's center page is printed in purple, with Linotext title and initial caps. Black and white artworks throughout the magazine include pen and ink, pencil, and charcoal drawings, photographs, and linoleum block prints.

PRODUCTION: EVERYONE DOES EVERYTHING

Ms. Klister started the magazine in 1969, at the suggestion of five sophomore students who said they would like to see some of their friends' works published. Although production work is now done in an elective course, up until 1985, Ragnaroc's staff of 16-18 students met entirely after school hours. The staff is open to anyone interested, and encompasses all levels of artistic and academic achievement. Ms. Klister observes a magazine policy of "everyone does everything," and sees her role as that of a consultant. Her primary objective is to teach the staff decision making skills, and when need be, to ask questions that will help the staff arrive at a decision, but the students themselves make final choices.

All writing and art are contributed by students, and all production work--editing, design and paste-up--is performed by

students, with the following exceptions: for the 1984 edition, two pieces of faculty writing were published, and the advisor typed one piece of copy and acted as a third proofreader for five pieces of copy in the galley stage, at the request of the editor. Printing is completed by an outside contractor. As per staff policy, each member is responsible for contributing his or her all to every phase of planning, production, financing, and publicity. Exceptions are typing and copyreading.

SUBMISSIONS: QUALITY

Between the months of September and February, the staff encourages students to submit writing and artwork for publication in Ragnaroc by means of PA announcements and posters. Staff members also ask English teachers to remind students of the opportunity to submit. For the 1984 issue, students submitted 293 pieces of writing and 103 pieces of art and photography. For some issues, the staff advertises for faculty submissions, although response is low. Two faculty works were published in the 1984 edition, however, on the same basis as the student contributions: staff did not know which pieces were written by students and which were written by faculty.

When faced with decisions between variety and quality, the staff chooses quality. Because all work is submitted by students, there is no guarantee that any art and text will ever complement each other. "When the ingenious staff cannot match the two, it is pleased to print the art or text for its intrinsic value."

Ms. Klister notes that about half of the submissions are generated by class assignments. Most of the poetry is personal

writing, while most of the prose submissions stem from coursework. She also notes that, due to changes in the freshman and sophomore writing curriculum, submissions from these two grade levels has decreased somewhat.

FUNDING: FIRST PLACE AWARD

Ragnaroc receives $700, approximately 26 percent of its $3,500 budget from the school, and 9 percent from monetary donations of patrons and sponsors. Advance sales of the magazine account for 38 percent of the budget, and for the 1984 issue, another 3 percent came from a competition in which Ragnaroc received First Place award as the best magazine in DeKalb County.

The remaining 24 percent of the budget comes from student fundraising activities. In addition to bake sales, the staff sells flowers twice a year and sponsors a Christmas dance as well. In 1984, the staff served an "Italian Dinner" for lunch in the school cafeteria.

Ragnaroc is produced at a cost of $7.75 per copy for a print run of 425, and is sold for $5.00 at publication. The subscription price is $4.00. Approximately 38 percent of expenses are recovered through sales. Complimentary copies are distributed to surrounding parishes, communities and local services.

CHANGES: ELECTIVE COURSE

Ragnaroc is now produced during class time in an elective English course on literary magazine production. The course is open to any interested students at all four grade levels. Ms. Klister acknowledges that the course format poses grading

problems that she did not have when the staff worked after school hours.

Ms. Klister, however, still adheres to the "everyone does everything" policy in the class, and continues to teach the decision-making process. Despite the change to a class format for production and the problems it poses, Ragnaroc remains an innovative and competitively excellent magazine.

**

Copies of Ragnaroc X may be obtained from

St. Pius X Catholic High School

2674 Johnson Road N.E.

Atlanta, GA 30345

Cost: $6.00 (includes postage)

RAGNAROC X

May, 1984

Ragnaroc, Volume fifteen, number one, is the literary-art magazine published annually by the students of St. Pius X Catholic High School, 2674 Johnson Road, N.E., Atlanta, Georgia 30345. *Ragnaroc* is a member of the Scholastic Press Association, the Southern Interscholastic Press Association, and the Georgia Scholastic Press Association. All work is submitted by the students of St. Pius X Catholic High School and is selected anonymously for publication by the magazine staff.

Rag•na•rok/'rag-na-răk/n [ON *ragna rĕk*, Twilight of the Gods]: the cataclysmic recreation of the earth; the formation of a completed whole from discordant parts.

RAGNAROD X

Table of Contents

Art

Air Brush
Eric Marston ..... cover
Pencil
Matt Lucas 4
Pencil
Matt Lucas 5
Linoleum
Sandy Steinhauer 6
Linoleum
Shawn Standard 7
Pencil
Eric Marcum 7
Pen and Ink
Jonathan Brisbane 8
Charcoal
Kevin Richardson 9
Pencil
David Garten 10
Colored Pencil
Patrick Whalen 13
Pencil
Matt Lucas 15
Colored Paper
Gwen Westfall 17
Photograph
Eric Marston 17
Colored Pencil
John Claviio 18
Pencil
Eric Marston 19
Photograph
Mark Bornstein 19
Illustrations
Julian Delgado 22, 23
Mixed Medium
John Claviio 24
Colored Pencil
Catherine Young 26
Photograph
Thomas Peters 27
Pen and Ink
Ed Delgado 28
Chalk
Catherine Young 30
Scatchboard Reproduction
Kevin Richardson 32
Linoleum
Ed Delgado 35
Air Brush
Eric Marston 36
Colored Pencil
Julian Delgado 37
Photograph
Thomas Peters 38
Photograph
Michael Merkle 39

Poetry

"The Lover"
Jeannine Marlar 4
"My Cracked Pen Breaks"
Dan Grill 4
"The Open Door"
Cole Ollinger 4
"Conflicting Worlds"
Amy Conroy 7
"Scotland's Loch"
Patty van Hamond 7
"Song of a City"
Jeannine Marlar 13
"Great-Aunt Isabel"
Michelle Kleinhans 14
"Cambio"
Laura Richardson 14
"Lost"
Jo Ellen McFadden 15
"I Stand"
Jeannine Marlar 17
"Executive Futility"
Cole Ollinger 24
"Conversation (With Myself)"
Kelly Clark 25
"Exam Week"
Jeannine Marlar 29
"An Agent of Selection"
Mimmo 29
"Audio/Visual"
Laura Richardson 29
"I'll Be Much Better"
Georgia Satte. 31
"Death by Male"
Kelly Clark 31
"Ex Post Facto"
Laurie Joseph 31
"Rage"
Ed Delgado 32
"The Visitor"
Mike Torino 32
"1983"
Laura Richardson 32
"Sacred and Profane"
Mimmo 33
"Truth"
Cole Ollinger 34
"Perhaps"
Laurie Joseph 35
"Compassion"
Cole Ollinger 35
"Beastly Beauty"
Belinda Walker 36
"The Ex-Lovers"
Ed Delgado 37
"State"
Jerome Kramer 37
"Faded Day"
Pat Adams 39

Prose

"Discovering An End"
Molly Pitra 5
"In All This Rain"
Lynn Dobson 6
"Yesterday's Hero"
Joe Healy 8
"Love That Has No Objectivity"
Mandy Morrison 11
"The Biography of Katie Kaiser"
Yvette Fletcher 12
"Late Summer Fall"
Jerome Kramer 14
"The Saga of Little Red Ronnie the Hood"
Patrick Brisbane 16
"I Was a Teenage Leftist"
Kelly Clark 18
"St. Pius Chronicle"
Dan Grill 19
"Snow Purple and the Seven Little Pigs"
Patrick Brisbane 20
"An Interview with Eric Von Klip"
Jerry V. Kramer 22
"Beauty Drug"
Ed Delgado 26
"Mr. Asia"
Ed Delgado 33
"Backroads"
Kelly Clark 38

The Lover

Once when I was two or three
I fell in love with words
And found a lover—who avoided me
And rent my life—to shards

A gigolo—a siren's wail—
An insubstantial sprite
He runs from me—during the day
He sings to me at night

He sings of passion—sings of love
Of death—insanity
Is another of his favorite songs
Then night turns into day—

And off he runs—the impudence
Of this—young—poltergeist
Is equalled only by the love
Between us as—I—wait

Jeannine Marlar

My Cracked Pen Breaks

My pen is cracked.
I have to do my homework
tonight with this feeble pen.

After school: Dread!
Same shaky routine;
Family constantly uptight.
Mother always worrying
about me.

Let me take care of myself.
Why not?
Of course, I can.
All right, maybe not all the time
and you know I need you too.
I'm sorry about those things.
Please don't do this. I only
want to be more indepen. . .

Verbal struggle; bitter fight.
Where will I live?

People hurt.
Feelings shattered.
My pen is broken.

Dan Grill

Pencil by *Matt Lucas*

The Open Door

After all the doors are slammed
and all the rejections have been laid down
and lights dimmed
and commotion quelled
and angers soothed
and tears dried
there is always a place
that one can hide
and here
one doesn't have to hide.
The door is always open

at home.

Cole Ollinger

Discovering An End

—Molly Pitra

"Joey, give Pooh Bear back. You're hurting him!" I tugged on Pooh's legs as Joey held Pooh's head tight. We wrestled back and forth until Pooh's legs were no longer part of his body. "Joey," I screamed, "Pooh Bear's dead!" And he was.

Mom told me to clean up Pooh's stuffing out of the carpet. I thought of it as Pooh's blood. While picking up the stuffing, I planned Pooh Bear's funeral, but the funeral itself wasn't anything like I had pictured. Instead of having the family gathered in the backyard over his grave, Mom dropped him in the trash can and said she'd get me another one. "Another one?" I questioned. "When something dies, we get one alike in return?"

It was the first death I had known, and it was nothing like I had imagined. I grew to forget Pooh Bear, and tried to understand death. . .

"Molly, you baby, you still believe in Santa?" Julie and Jennifer asked teasingly. "We have something to show you." They took me down to the basement. I didn't even recognize the place. It looked like Santa's workshop. I was confused and wondered why loads of toys were already there. "Molly, Mom and Dad are Santa," Julie and Jennifer said surprisingly.

"I don't believe you!" I yelled back. My eyes watered.

Santa not real? For years I'd believed in nothing but an imaginary character. The realization of this hit me hard. I cried because I looked at the situation as a death. The death was of childhood. . .

Pencil by *Matt Lucas*

We were on our way back from church. We hadn't even made it up the driveway when Julie hit it. The sound of Julie's yelling and the young puppy's crying still echoes in my mind sometimes. Julie couldn't handle the situation, so she ran into the house, leaving Jennifer, Joey, and me to clean the mess. I reached for a bucket and hose to wash the blood down the street. My eyes began to water for Julie and the small puppy. Death had come into contact with me. I saw something real, alive, and yet so young die. My tears washed down the street with the puppy's blood as his body was moved into a small cardboard box. . .

My mother called us to a meeting around the breakfast room table. There were three empty seats, for the family had started moving on. "I don't know how to tell you this. I guess the way it was told to me would be the best manner." I cringed at the thought of bad news, wondering if I were strong enough to handle it. My mother's eyes watered as she told the news of my father in the same manner the doctor told her. I caught only one phrase and blocked out the rest. "Your father's dying," she said in such a gentle voice. Three harsh words, spoken in such a gentle way, that were sure to change my life. "He has four to six months left," Mom told us. In those months I felt as though I was the one dying. Death was close, and it was leaving a different feeling. A feeling of anger. It left the reminder of how I thought of death before. . .

As the casket was lowered into the ground, Pooh Bear, Santa, and the young puppy were buried along with my father. ∞

In All This Rain

—Lynn Dobson

"Kim, are you coming or not!"

"Yea, yea, 'course I am. Do I have much choice? Let me just get my coat."

HONK, HONK, HONK!

"My gosh! Some people have absolutely no patience!"

Where did I put my coat? I had it when I got home but now I can't—HONK, HONK, HONK! I sure hope it's in the car!

Man, what a yucky day! I don't think it's stopped raining for four days straight. And they haven't been just drizzle rains either. We're talking downpours. If this doesn't let up soon, we might have to start work on the U.S.S. Ark #2!

"Did you remember to let the dogs back in?"

"Yes, Mom. How could I forget? You've only reminded me seven times, not including now."

I hate sounding so terrible, but I just can't help it. This past month has been so rough on all of us. Ever since they took Dad out of I.C.U. and put him into a room where he could have visitors, we have been making this trip to the hospital every day. And it is the trips that are the worst. Seeing Dad is okay although we can't really stay for too long. At least he is looking better. But the rides there are unbearable. The tension can be cut with a knife. Nobody is the same. A joke is taken seriously, and reality just can't be laughed at. And God knows we can all use a laugh.

We pull into the parking lot, and the usual man is sitting in the usual booth with the usual smile on his face. His name is Sam.

"How's your husband doing?" Sam asks with just enough emotion not to sound concerned.

"Oh, about the same, thanks," Mom replies with a smiling sigh.

I can't help wishing that people like Sam didn't always have to feel like they have to care. The hypocrisy of life is sometimes enough to make me sick. As we get out of the car, I forget that I don't have a coat on.

Linoleum by *Sandy Steinhauer*

I get it for that too.

"If you would have just hurried up!"

"If you hadn't been so impatient!"

It just never seems to end.

The nurse at the desk greets us with another one of those Sam smiles and inquires about my father. Mom gives the stock answer again, and we walk on. Mr. Hypocrisy is here to stay.

The gloom of hospitals seems to hang in the air. Emergencies are constantly popping up, but no one is ever supposed to know just how bad things are. It seems like the one place that would have to have the truth is the one place that hides it so well. Everyone is always in such a hurry at hospitals, like those two guys that just tore around with that stretcher. Honestly, no one seems to have time to slow down anymore.

Mom stops off at the bathroom, so I just wander around. As morbid as hospitals are, they are awfully fascinating at the same time. Like all those gadgets and etc. that are used for etc. and etc. You can't help but find it interesting.

"Ready?" Mom comes out of the bathroom.

"Sure," I say with my first smile of the day and put my arm around her shoulder. It's you and me against the world, I think as we round the corner and head towards Dad's room. I freeze as his door comes into sight. That same stretcher that had almost run us over is outside his door, only this time they are putting all the apparatus back onto it, and the guys look too exhausted to have been breathless from running.

As I think this, horror hits both Mom's and my eyes at the same instant because she lets out a small whimper and runs from under my arm. She races into the room and I can hear her scream once she gets inside. I stop just outside the door, afraid for the first time to see my own father.

"He had another cardiac arrest, and we just couldn't bring him back." The doctor's voice trails out the door. "We did our best, but it was just so sudden. It was even too sudden for him to know what happened. He didn't suffer."

He didn't suffer. Great. He left that up to us, too.

Mom stays in his room for a while and says her goodbyes, but I say mine from the floor outside his door. I want to remember him as I knew him best.

The doctor brings Mom to the door, and I rise to replace his hand on her shoulder with mine. He speaks to me, but I only turn with my mother and walk slowly away. No, it really is she and I against the world.

We pass by the same nurses with the same Sam smiles on their faces as we leave. Doesn't it ever end?

As we walk back to the car, I am drenched clean through to my soul. I think I'll never be dry again, inside or out. It doesn't really seem to matter anymore because it just keeps raining. ∞

Linoleum by *Shawn Standard*

Pencil by *Eric Marcum*

Conflicting Worlds

As I sit here,
    stranger to their world,
I see small bits
    and pieces
Of various lives.

I wait
    for those I am
Familiar with.
I wait,
    to return to my
Familiar world.

The clothes and conversation
    are strange
To me.
My uniform looks
    out of place.

Some smile,
    some laugh.
Some don't even notice
    this strange girl
Invading
    their world.

Amy Conroy

Scotland's Loch

Shrill calls rent winter's deathly silence,
The warbler heralds the epochal ebb and flow.
Frozen rivers splinter and thaw,
Waters course in a thunderous tumult.
Icicles, like fingers, loosen their grip
Upon naked boughs, naked limbs—
To be clothed in the season's virginal fashions:
Rebirth of Scotland's Loch.

Patty van Hamond

Yesterday's Hero

—Joe Healy

The crowd was the usual size, not very big. A mild breeze was blowing in from right field, and the night had a lazy kind of warmth.

Willie had the night off again. These days he started only against lefties. He sat next to the new rookie pitcher just brought up from the AAA farm team. Willie wasn't too familiar with the rookie, but he possessed a certain cockiness which Willie found entertaining. He remembered another rookie some years ago who had the same hot dog personality.

Willie didn't talk much to the new kid. He didn't talk much to anybody anymore. Most of his friends were retired now. He was a stranger now where he had been a star. People found Willie keeping to himself mostly.

A seasoned veteran from Philadelphia was at first base tonight.

Pen and Ink by *Jonathan Brisbane*

The club had acquired him at the beginning of the season to split time with Willie at first. Willie had moved to first base a few years ago to compensate for his aging legs. His moments of glory had been in right field. A young kid with a multimillion dollar contract played there now.

As the game progressed, Willie's team had lost a three-run lead and was presently tied. The contest was reaching its final stages. The pitcher had become tired and Willie knew that he wouldn't last much longer. A lefty and a righty had been warming up in the bullpen and were ready now. Willie remembered the times when pitchers almost always pitched the whole game. Today's kids aren't tough enough, he thought.

Willie was tough. He had put his body through some grueling tests but had always recovered from them. The bruises hurt more now, though. Little things demanded greater effort. His ankles and knees were blanketed in tape. His belly had become a dominant feature, and his once black hair was sprinkled with gray. The longer summer nights and years of travelling had begun to show on the old warrior's face. This wasn't the same body that had won him three batting titles and various Golden Glove awards.

The pitcher miraculously pitched out of the jam he created, but he was the third batter due up this inning. The other team had just brought in a lefty. The manager told him he would bat for the pitcher.

This was the fourth manager that Willie had gone through with the team. This manager was three years Willie's junior. With the rest of the players, the younger ones, he had the arrogance of one who is given too much power. He treated Willie as some kind of foreigner. Willie had been through much more than he had, more than he could relate to. Knowing that any sort of relationship would be artificial, the manager never made much effort at establishing a friendship with the veteran.

The last inning found the score still tied. Extra innings seemed very likely. The first batter of the inning failed in his mission to reach base safely, but the second succeeded.

Willie warmed up with the weighted bat in the on deck circle while waiting for his name to be announced. When he was introduced, just a faint applause rose from the fans. Years ago they would have stood and anxiously cheered as the public address system heralded that glorious name.

Willie stepped toward the plate. He took a few practice swings as he peered at the third base coach. He dug in his back foot and focused on the pitcher, another old warrior trying to regain the fame of his youth. Willie knew he was fighting for a lost cause. His fastball had lost its zing, and his curveball no longer broke as sharply as it once had. Sure, he was still effective—but only effective. He would never again be a hero.

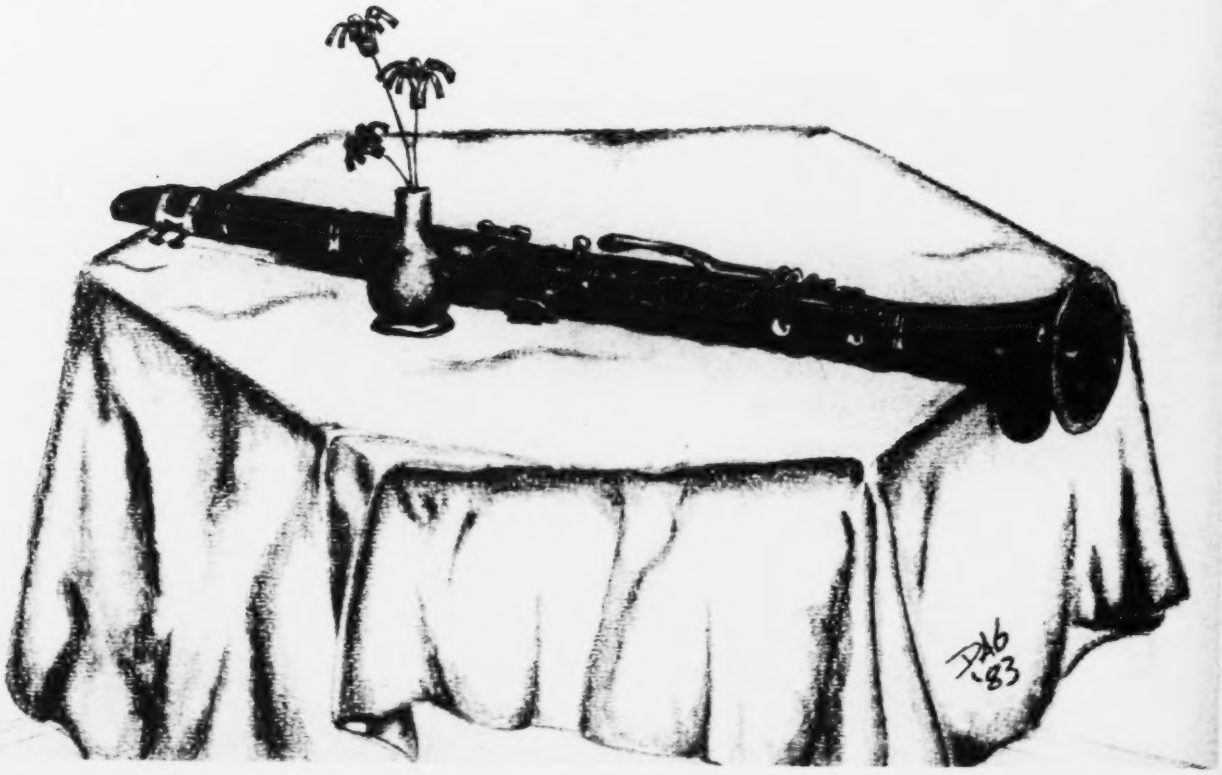
The first pitch was a curve that Willie missed by a foot. It wasn't as good a pitch as it was a bad swing. Willie stepped out of the batter's box. Could he still produce, or was he merely fooling himself? Was he living in his past?

He stepped back in. The next pitch sailed outside. Willie awaited the next pitch with a grim face. It was a letter-high fastball that Willie sent to the base of the left center field fence, just under the 411-foot sign. The centerfielder raced to retrieve the ball as the runner, once on first, touched the third base bag. The centerfielder lobbed the ball back to the infield. Any play at the plate was just wishful thinking.

As Willie approached second base, he breathed a sigh of relief. A handful of his teammates ran out to greet him. A boyish grimace covered the old man's face. He jogged back to the dugout with a sense of accomplishment.

The pitcher took off his glove and carried it in his other hand. He walked, head down, to the dugout. Willie caught a glimpse of him. His smile shrank a little. ∞

Charcoal by *Kevin Richardson*



Pencil by *David Garten*

18

Love That Has No Objectivity

—Mandy Morrison

I sat on the corner of my grandmother's bed at the nursing home, listening to her reminisce about her childhood.

A funny feeling came over me as I took notes on my grandmother's life! Love that has no objectivity has been our bond. That I was her favorite, neither she nor I nor anyone else in the family doubted. Now I was listening to her objectively, and the difference in our worlds glared at me. Not only were our clothes different; our whole childhoods, because of time and material wealth, were miles apart. I began to jot down the types of luxuries that I possess at the age of fifteen that she never possessed until she had had children my age.

Grandma didn't have a choice of her clothes. She wore the one pair of shoes she owned to school and church, and when summer came she went barefoot. I can choose between my Docksiders or my Campsides in the morning to wear to school. I choose between my Asahis or my Adidas for P.E. Two woolen shirts and a designer cotton dress I have to my name, and I would gladly exchange them for three pairs of Levi jeans. Yet, my grandmother owned one dress, which she took pride in wearing to church every Sunday even though it was made from the bag that the chicken feed came in. When I was five I wore overalls like a conductor of a train would wear and thought they were super neato because they said OshKosh on the large pocket across my chest. Waking up with the sun, Grandma would slip on her overalls that she wore out in the fields every day to pull weeds, and they would be washed at the end of the week.

When I go home in the evening from school or when I'm at home in the summer, my "chores" consist of mowing the lawn, doing dishes, cleaning my room, or taking out the trash. In fact, my "chores" are just that; life around our house could go on without much trouble if I didn't do them. This was not the case with my grandmother's work. Getting up early to go out in the fields and pull up the dew-covered weeds from between the corn stalks, helping plant crops so her family would have food in the winter, and loading the wheat or the corn onto the horse-drawn wagon were just a sampling of the jobs she did. Her family depended on her chores as part of their livelihood.

"Man," I commented. "That would have been hard! I'm glad I didn't grow up then."

Laughing at my horror, or perhaps at my laziness, she replied, "It wasn't so hard. It kept us out of meanness." She stared at the chair across from her and said, really to no one in particular, "I'm right glad I lived through them times!"

We both sat on the bed in silence, and I heard her words ring in my head. I wondered how anyone could appreciate living the life she did.

From the time we were able to run and catch a ball, my sister and I would play tag, football, kickball, and race our matchbox cars and trucks. We always looked forward to getting a new football from my dad or buying a new matchbox car with our weekly allowance. But "new" was not a word in my grandma's vacabulary. Jumping an old rope from the barn filled some of the free time that my grandmother was so grateful for. The rest of the free time she had was spent playing with her sisters, making clothes for their dolls, and letting the dolls talk back and forth. These simple pastimes filled the small gaps of leisure in her day between working in the fields, working in the kitchen, going to school, and sleeping at night only to rise at the rooster's crow.

Another difference is that, from childhood, Grandma had to live with the memories of death in her family. A mother, father, three sisters, and four brothers made up her family. While she was still young, one of her brothers died of epilepsy and, a decade later, another brother died of spinal meningitis. No one in my family, which consists of a mother, father, and sister, has died and I can't remember the death of anyone related to me. I probably won't have to face the death of a family member until I'm twice as old as I am now, thanks to medical breakthroughs and experiments which were not even dreamed of in 1903. I don't hold within myself the hidden pain of a dead loved one as my grandmother does, and I'm thankful.

My grandma lived with one pair of shoes, a Sunday dress, a pair of overalls to work in, an old rope, a doll, waking up with the sun to do daily chores, and the death of loved ones. I found these facts about her life astonishing; but when she said, "I wish I could turn time backward and be young again," I could see the strength of Hercules in the eighty-one year old woman's gaunt, frail body. Sitting on her bed and listening to her words, I saw the pain she endured throughout her life. Life in her day was so hard and difficult compared to mine; yet, she could appreciate things with a greater strength than I. I looked over at the old woman and saw a small, distant light of memory glow in her eyes. She then turned and said to me, "People thought times were hard, but now that I think about it, they weren't so tough."

She said no more, and I just sat looking at her in awe. ∞

The Biography of Katie Kaiser

—Yvette Fletcher

Pushing and shoving through a massive crowd, Katie Shmidt, a sixteen year old girl, fought her way to board the overcrowded ship called *Northland,* which was traveling from Hungary to America. Frightened by people whom she had never seen before in her life, she almost began to panic.

It was 1913, and Katie was moving to a country which was very new to her; very different from the "old country." This was to be a place where "money grew on trees" and "caviar was a popular snack." America, others told her, was where wealth and luxury dwelled in the lives of all citizens. Although this sounded fantastic to Katie, she was not exactly ready for this tremendous change.

During the voyage to America, Miss Shmidt found it difficult to find pleasure. Many people wefe feeling sick and restless over the long, slow journey. There was nothing to do for enjoyment. Luckily, Katie had brought a book with her, which she read while others just sat around doing nothing.

The excursion lasted longer than expected. By the twenty-third day, the ship landed in New York. Again, there was an immense crowd, making matters even more confusing. Fortunately, Katie discovered a person who could help her find the correct train to Wisconsin.

On the train, each person was given a small box containing one apple, one orange, two bananas, and a small loaf of bread. Unfortunately, Katie had never seen a banana in her life. She tried to bite it, but it was much too tough and bitter. So, without knowing how to consume the strange fruit, Katie threw the bananas out the window. This left her with only a small amount of food for two days.

After forty-eight long hours had crept by, the train finally came to her stop. Although she was very fatigued, Katie grabbed her bags and flew out the door of the train with the rest of the crowd. A large number of people rushed toward their relatives and friends who greeted them joyously, welcoming them to the new country with hugs and kisses.

Katie began to feel very awkward. When she was an infant, Katie's parents were extremely poor. They heard that the United States was the most wonderful and wealthiest place to live. Thinking that by moving to America they would become rich, her parents proceeded to do so, leaving Katie with her grandmother, and planning to send for her when they were settled and secure.

Strangly enough, it took Katie's parents fifteen years to adjust to their new home. After this time, a telegram was sent to Katie and her grandmother, informing them that Katie was to come and live with them in America. Although Katie was thrilled to move to a new and enterprising world, she loved her grandmother and her home. But, of course, she did as she was told and left all the people she loved and cared for behind.

Hundreds of people rushed here and there to different destinations while Katie stood in astonishment. Where was she to go to find her father? Katie could not communicate very well with the employees at the station because she could not speak English. Nobody was willing to try to assist poor Katie, who could speak only German.

Up and down the premises she walked, wondering when her father would find her. In her hand Katie held a miniature photograph of her father. By looking at this she was supposed to recognize her father when she saw him.

Unfortunately, Katie's father never showed up at the planned time, eight o'clock that evening.

Hours passed. Feeling deserted, Katie was scared. There was not a single person who could understand her. The temperature dropped to almost five degrees below zero. Katie was wearing a short dress that fell only to her knees. Tattered and worn, her coat only moderately helped in keeping her from freezing. Against the harsh, brutal weather of this different country, Katie was fighting to survive.

Darkness covered the entire station, except for one street lamp which was shining quite dimly a short way up the street. Tears filled Katie's sweet, but frigid, brown eyes as she trod up the snow-covered sidewalk to reach the gleaming light that spared a little hope. The moisture on her face froze like icicles hanging from the lamp where Katie was standing. Whatever could be more extreme than this? thought Katie, feeling lonesome and cut off from the rest of the world. If only I were back home. If only I were back home. These words rushed through her mind like a storm.

Looking up at the apex of the street, Katie could faintly see a figure of a person marching back and forth as if he were patrolling the area. Full of hope, she ran up the street, dragging her luggage toward the person. Discovering that it was a hefty policeman, Katie frantically asked him for help. Fortunately, the policeman understood her and answered her back in German. The officer told Katie that he could take her to the nearest hotel, where she could sleep and be warm for a night. .

Suddenly, from around the corner, Katie's father showed up and asked her where she had been all the time he was looking for her. They had been waiting on the opposite side of the station. At this, the tears and sadness left Katie.

When Katie reached her new home, her mother and sister were overjoyed at seeing her. She was greeted with a hot meal and a cozy bed.

The next morning, Katie was

taken to the woolen factory where she was to work. At the beginning, the labor was tedious and boring. But with encouragement from her fellow workers, this all passed.

As the weeks went by, Katie thought about her grandmother and all the people and memories she had left behind. She really missed them all; and if she had had a chance to go back, she probably would have. But Katie made the best of it. America was certainly not what she had expected. There was no money growing on trees or luxury food taken for granted. People were positively not full of wealth.

Passing slowly but surely, the years held many important events in Katie's life. Her parents decided whom she should marry. When Katie first met Frank Kaiser, her soon-to-be husband, she was a bit skeptical; but Frank turned out to be an extremely warm and passionate person. Katie was delighted to take him as a husband. They married, both at eighteen.

After a few years of marriage, Frank and Katie bore two beautiful girls, Regina and Katherine. Of course, Katie quit her job at the factory so that she could look after her daughters. Since Frank was a frugal man who had saved his money and could well support his family, Katie's work in the factory was not necessary.

One day, while Katie was happily preparing dinner for her family, an abrupt boom was heard from the garage, where Frank was working on his automobile. In panic, Katie raced out the door, clattered down the steps, and flung open the garage door. There was Frank lying on the floor. She ran over to him, but it was too late. He was dead from an explosion in the engine of his car. Katie clutched him in her arms, but there was nothing on earth that could bring him back. He had been the most wonderful thing that had ever happened to her.

Although the death of her spouse was a tragedy, Katie proceeded with life. The encouragement from her family aided her a great deal in recovering.

The rest of Katie's life has been lived quite simply. Her daughters grew into very successful young women. Regina, a teacher, married and has five bright children. Katherine, a social worker, also married and has one child. At present, Katie has twelve great-grandchildren, who all adore her and bring her much comfort.

Her life experiences have made Katie Kaiser an understanding, courageous and wise person. She is an inspiration to all who meet her.

Author's Note

I am very proud to tell you that Katie Kaiser is my eighty-seven year old great-grandmother. Grandma has always fascinated me with all the stories that she tells me whenever she visits us in Georgia. Still living in Wisconsin, she enjoys being with all of her friends. Unfortunately, I see her only about once a year. I will deeply miss her when she passes away. ∞

Colored Pencil by *Patrick Whalen*

Song of a City

The steam flashes from the manhole
Some albino sister of the northern lights
Fleeing the damp velvet underground
For the brittle sky

In the blistering sun it convulses
Kicking to return to the murky dark
To the whores and the drag queens
To the sordid, warm thoroughfares

The newspaper woman at her stand
Has a hunchback and a mole
The size of a shiny roach crawling
On her face

Shrugging into her mildew-colored sweater
She looks at the sharp-edged papers again
Wishing to put them to the torch
And dance to the flame's music

Jeannine Marlar

Great-Aunt Isabel

My Great-Aunt Isabel
with her spruce dresses
and gaudy jewelry
and her white dog,
Peeky, that sits upon
her knee all day
in the sublime house
upon a verdant hill
asked me to come
and stay with her awhile
and we could sip
nutmeg tea from fragile
china teacups while
she articulated to me
about the war and depression
and other particulars essential
to my education.
So I ventured to see her
in all her finery.
Her amiable Peeky was
there on her lap
and we sat down
for tea at a
mahogany table dressed
in oriental lace.
I stared at her
golden brooch, worn at
her neck, and she
told me about her
life in foreign lands
while I nibbled warm
honey biscuits.
When the clock struck
a solitary chime, she
arose and stated that
I should be getting
home. So I bade
her farewell and stepped
out into the crisp air,
shutting the door with
the brass knocker and leaving
the grand house
behind me.

Michelle Kleinhans

Late Summer Fall

—Jerome Kramer

Mr. Curran was a pleasant gentleman, a man who appreciated a walk and a green tree, and as he was retired, he was able to indulge in strolls among the bowed old hardwoods around his neighborhood. It was his civil habit to stride from his home into the center of town each mid-morning, where he would take lunch at an eatery and would exchange talk with men his age and kid the waitress.

As Mr. Curran walked, he vaguely noticed a rise in the sidewalk, a crack, but he reflected on its importance only after he had suddenly, and completely to his surprise, sat down. Here he was, abruptly frozen in embarrassment, and wondering about his health. He noticed that the late summer oaks were further away than they had been while he had been walking, and then he was struck by fear, fear that showed through his lean face, as he realized the shock he had experienced and simultaneously realized how he was attracting the concern of passing cars. He was sitting up, his arms stretched in back of his body, holding him up, and his legs stretched forward, one flat and the other bent at the knee. He seemed unable to move, for it simply did not occur to him to. So he sat.

"Are you all right? Sir?"

Mr. Curran continued to stare ahead, but he was aware of a bicycler dismounting and kneeling in front of him.

"Sir?"

It is time to get going, thought Mr. Curran. He began to slide himself forward, ever so slowly. "I think so. I think so."

Cars would not desist staring at him. Mr. Curran was struck again by amazement that he had so sadly fallen and decided he would decline the bicycler's proffered hand.

The sidewalk is damp, and its dampness (not to mention this pinecone) is annoying my pants. This avenue is certainly leafy, and I wish I had not sat down in such an ungainly manner.

A tear rose to Mr. Curran's decent eyes, and this gentleman moved his arm to brush it away. He was not so old as to lose such a degree of control. Behind him, he heard the clatter of small wheels. He took the cyclist's hand and brushed off his trousers as he stood up.

"Thank you," said Mr. Curran, although his aching pride would have preferred to recover unassisted. The bicycler expressed further concern, and Mr. Curran assured him that he was quite well. The clatter of the wheels had stopped, and a young mother stood behind Mr. Curran, surrounded by several small children and a stroller.

"We saw you. . ." she said. "Are you all right? We brought this water. . ."

"Thanks very much, Miss," said Mr. Curran, embarrassed again upon realizing that she had seen him and had been concerned. "But I'm really fine. Just a surprise. Thank you."

"Oh." The young lady felt she

Cambio

Maybe
It's the
Curly brown mop
That now sits atop
my head.
Or maybe
it's the
college mail
I've been receiving
lately.
But I'm beginning
To do something
my friends have done—
involuntarily, mind you—
but it's happening.
Change.
Growing up.
Now I know
how a friend feels
each time he tells me,
"Laura—
I'm an old man."

Laura Richardson

needed to say more. "We just saw you. . .you're fine?"

"Thank you." This addressed both the bicycler and the mother. Mr. Curran sympathetically noticed the little children, who squirmed impatiently in their wish to be on.

"Well, I must be on. So sorry for the inconvenience." I am not so old. "It was just a surprise." Their still concerned faces pained him. "Please!" he begged.

The young mother and her brood must return, said a polite glance at his watch, and the bicycler passed them a block down the avenue. Mr. Curran still stood. He had no wish to explain his tardiness in town. He sighed with indecision and then turned around and walked home. He deprived himself of the pleasure of watching the sky's blue contrasting with the oaks' rich green. He would rather watch the sidewalk. He sighed, annoyed. There was no way to pretend he had not fallen. ∞

Lost

Knuckles white and wrinkles
stretched over trembling hands.
Tense, anxious hands.
Afraid of almost certain evaporation
and content's loss.
Precious pain
unable to escape
your closed fist.
Salty disgust making trails
and veins filling and protruding
in a deadly grip
on something long since extinguished
in the eyes of your fascination.
Waves of common sense
engulf your obsession,
and redness dances across your cheek,
and you return your heart to your pocket.
Your fingers begin to soften around
what is already lost,
crumpled in your sweaty palm.
You let it flutter. Don't look.
Common sense pats your shoulder.
You proudly exhale.
But your hand is empty.

Jo Ellen McFadden

Pencil by *Matt Lucas*

The Saga of Little Red Ronnie the Hood

—*Patrick Brisbane*

Once upon a time in a forest far, far away, there lived a small boy whose name was Little Red Ronnie the Hood. He was called this because of his activities in the forest, stealing from the poor and giving to the rich (but that's a different story, so onwards). Oh yes, he wore a red hood too.

One day, Little Red Ronnie the Hood's mentor, Tip C. O'Neill, decided to get Ronnie out of the way while Nancy redecorated the cottage and bought new place-settings.

"Little Red Ronnieee! Where are youuu!?!" he called.

Out popped Ronnie from behind a tree, wearing his little red hood and his favorite cowboy gun.

"What do you want?"

"Well, Ronnie, I think it would be a good idea if you went and visited your friends on the other side of the forest today."

"Awww!" Ronnie whined. (Ronnie whined a lot.)

"I guess you can stay to help work if you want," Tip said.

"I'm going, I'm going."

So Ronnie set off.

When he was about halfway there, Ronnie saw this bear sitting on the side of the road with a weird symbol emblazoned on its chest.

"Where are you going, little boy?" the bear said.

Ronnie looked around with surprise. He had never seen a talking bear before.

"Are you a bad guy?" he asked suspiciously.

"Nyet, I mean 'no,'" said the bear hurriedly, shaking his head.

"Okay, I'll tell ya: I'm going across the woods to visit my friends."

"Well, bye-bye," said the bear. "I won't keep you here any longer."

Then he ambled off into the woods and, unbeknownst to Ronnie, took the shortcut to Ronnie's friends' house.

Arriving at the house, the bear calmly ate all of Ronnie's friends and struggled to get into their clothes.

At this point Ronnie was coming out of the woods. He saw that his friends' house was strangely quiet except for an unusual stomping noise. He creeped up to the window and cautiously peeked in. There he saw the bear jumping up and down on one leg trying to get the other one through a pair of pants.

Ronnie quickly ran across the road and set up camp in an arcade. He thought for a while, then began building weapons, nuclear mainly, Titans, MX's, ICBM's, everything he could think of, and all MIRVed to the hilt.

Meanwhile, the bear, having caught sight of Ronnie, began to stockpile nuclear weapons as well.

After quite some time, a shouting match began.

"Get out of my friends' territory."

"No!"

"Yes!"

"No!"

"You'd better!"

"I'm not going to!"

"I'll nuke you!"

"I'll nuke *you!*"

This conversation, if that is what you wish to call it, went on for quite some time. Then Ronnie got an idea. Clandestinely, he launched a few short-range missiles on a circuitous route, which he thought the bear would never catch. Unfortunately for him, however, the bear did sight the missiles on his radar screen, which he just happened to have brought along. Quickly, he launched a counterattack directly at the arcade. Ronnie realized that his destruction was imminent after he saw the bear jumping around in the house, so he launched a counter-counterattack.

The resulting proliferation vaporized the woods in a circle with a one-hundred mile radius. With it also, Tip, Nancy, Ronnie, the arcade, the bear, the cottage, and all civilization were obliterated. ∞

Colored Paper by *Gwen Westfall*

I Stand

I stand on
a cor
ner
unsure where
to go
(who
loves you, ba
by he
says)
The light chan
ges and
I
(as his car
sings steal
thi
ly by) cross

Jeannine Marlar

Photograph by *Eric Marston*

I Was a Teenage Leftist

—*Kelly Clark*

It all started when I became concerned about the state of world affairs. Defense spending had devoured forty cents of every dollar of taxpayers' money. I was opposed to war, more specifically, nuclear war. In short, I was opposed to death; my own in particular. One evening I was just sitting around, and I asked my father why he supported the outrageous defense budget with his hard-earned-bread winnings. He replied that, as an average middle-class citizen, he was to think about it but not to take any action. "That," he said emphatically, "is what those reactionary radicals are for!" That's when I became a teenage leftist.

At first, I didn't know how to go about my new-found destiny, but I slowly learned. Treading the paths less oft trod, I checked books out of the library by Karl Marx, Lenin, Stalin, Ghandi and Ram Dors. I read about revolutions, the oppressed peoples, and human rights issues. I sold all my personal property and donated the money to the first charity I found in the phone book. My room contained only a woven mat. I shaved my head and wore only white pajamas and sandals. I resolved not to further support any capitalist pig business ventures, and I ate food I grew or gathered myself. I burned incense and meditated on what to do next.

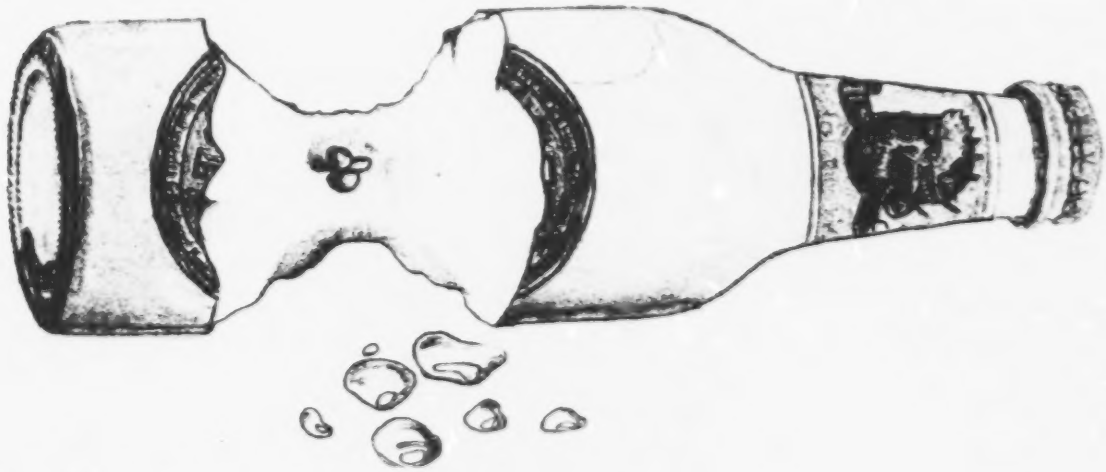
A major upset in my karma occurred as my family sat around watching reruns and eating Wendy's hamburgers. I denounced them as greedy materialistic souls who had lost touch with themselves. They thought I was on drugs and kicked me out of the house, screaming, "Gravy-sucking communist liberal!"

That week in my zeal to help save the world for a better tomorrow, I participated in three marches, a rally, and a violent demonstration. I was arrested and stayed in jail for two weeks. I fasted to protest this injustice, created my own civil disobedience essay, and wrote to every congressman, asking him to save the weasels, nuke the mutant lawyers, and stop the arms buildup.

When I was released from jail, I went immediately to the Red Cross and donated blood to cover living expenses. I moved into a Bohemian mid-town neighborhood and attended all-night political discussions with ten other involved members of my commune. We shared everything; and since "personal property is theft," I donated blood every week to pay off our *National Radical* newspaper. This was actually the happiest time of my life. I had received over five hundred dollars from giving blood; so I had to fill out a 1040 tax form. I naturally withheld military fund and was arrested again.

When I was in jail, I did a lot of thinking. It seems that I had been anti-everything except anti-radical. Therefore I switched my allegiance and began protesting against my own way of life. I called my parents up and begged for their forgiveness, blaming my behavior on the Hare Krishnas. They took me back, refurnished my room, and bought me new clothes and a telephone. I was enrolled in high school and became the model teenager. I coveted my narrow way of life. I rebelled against nothing except taking out the trash. My parents, overjoyed at having me recover to suburbia, agreed to send me to college.

That was five years ago. I am now married and stick to the middle of the road. I live in the suburbs and play bridge twice a month with other normal housewives. I am expecting my first child in two months, and we have planned to have the second in exactly one and a half years. I don't know if I'm happy or not. I never think much on my placid existence. I am not concerned about the missile silo just installed in our back yard. I'll let the radicals worry about it. Right now, I have to get my hair done. ∞



Colored Pencil by *John Clavijo*

Pencil by *Eric Marston*

Photograph by *Mark Bornstein*

ST PIUS CHRONICLE

Editor: Dan Grill

Kids Rally About Homework
Teachers Frustrated

UPI—Here at St. Pius High School, a mob of picketing teens has taken over the grounds, protesting the teachers' attitude toward homework. Teachers apparently aren't giving as much as students are demanding, creating a tension-filled situation, to say the least. Although many attempts have been made to pacify the youngsters, all have failed and failed miserably. The students' argument is that of high expectation of assignments, considering the increasing tuition being paid.

One student commented: "My God, it's terrible. These kids are becoming violent, stemming from the lack of hand-in assignments due tomorrow. As of yet, most have only three or four. . .five tops. I dunno, I don't think they'll stop lighting the fires until at least two more teachers assign homework. Who knows? It's terrible down here. Just terrible."

While the students, many of whom are seniors who avoid socializing as much as possible to squeeze in that extra novel each week, continue to protest, teachers agonize. They're searching for every possibility to create new homework tasks to please this bunch of demanding adolescents.

"We've done all we could," said one prominent faculty member. "We tried forcing those extra pages of math problems, but something just wouldn't let us do it. It's incredible! The entire faculty has been in a year long slump, and it looks like the students have had enough of it. We tried to negotiate, but all the essays, term-papers, and lab reports just aren't enough. All I can say is: I hope no one gets hurt."

One young demonstrator, probably a freshman, volunteered information concerning how this mess came about: "It all started with the textbook readings when teachers wouldn't give us the required fifty-five pages per night. Then things got really bad. Instead of assigning the problems at the end of the chapter, they began to ask us to just review them! The nerve! Not even a single written answer to be graded. Boy, I'll tell ya, those teachers ain't gettin' no mercy from me!"

As it seems, there won't be much of an agreement for a long time, although the heads of both factions are in conference presently. We won't know the outcome until—and I'm guessing—far into the evening.

So what kinds of terms are the rebels looking for? "Longer school days," says one. "No lunch period. The present lunch allotment could be used as a seminar period," added another. The final solution may not come until all of these demands are met.

However, there is hope for the teachers. As one pimply junior put it: "We're all looking toward the day when we, as students, can wake up one Friday morning and expect a test in each and every class. As for now? It's only a dream." ∞

Snow Purple and the

—*Patrick Brisbane*

Once upon a time, in the land of Kazoo, there lived a beautiful girl named Snow Purple. Why was she called Snow Purple? I don't rightly know, but she was born to a poor woodcutter and his wife, both of whom put together couldn't overcome an ice-cube in a match of wits. Anyway, Snow Purple, as I have said, was very beautiful. Unfortunately however, she inherited the most prominent trait of her parents—their I.Q. Snow Purple was about half as smart as either of them, the epitome of the mythical (maybe?) dumb blonde. Her one talent was playing the tympani. This talent, however, was untapped, as no one she knew had ever heard of tympani before. Thus, she was generally acclaimed as near worthless.

In the nearby capital, Kaboo there lived a queen who was the principal percussionist of the Kaboo Philharmonic Orchestra. She considered herself to be the best tympanist in the world, and to prove this to herself, she often asked her magic mallets on the wall (she kept them on a shelf, actually), "Who's the greatest tympanist of all?" Usually, upon asking this question, she would receive the trite answer, "You are, my queen." One day, however, soon after Snow Purple had reached the ripe old age of thirteen, when the queen asked the question, she received the answer, "Snow Purple, the daughter of the poor woodcutter, is." When she heard this, the queen turned the proverbial green with envy. She grabbed the mallets and, shaking with rage, hurled them out the window. After she had ordered one of her servants to retrieve them, she sat down and began to plot as to how she could regain her title.

When the servant had returned, she said to her magic mallets, "What can I do to rectify this situation?"

"Nothing," said the mallets gloatingly, "except..." The rest of his words were lost as he sailed out the window. When the servant had again returned with the magic mallets, they continued. "As I was saying, except to get rid of her."

"What?"

"You know, knock her off, do away with her, liquidate her, take her for a ride, bump her off," he said, winking slyly.

"Hmmmm."

Snow Purple was sitting outside her parents' cottage a few days after the evil queen's tantrum, drooling. Some said that that was what she did best, not knowing of her tympanistic talent. That day though, she had poor attendance. Only three squirrels, a rabbit, and a chipmunk had gathered in awe to watch her slobber. The villagers were probably otherwise occupied.

Suddenly, just as one of the more weak-stomached squirrels threw up, a man, riding horseback, galloped over to Snow Purple, put her into a sack, and rode away without even gagging.

That day at the seven pigs' house had been awfully quiet. They had finished arguing over whose turn it was to make breakfast, whose turn it was to clean up, and were just beginning a squabble which, left uninterrupted, might have developed into a full-scale fight, but suddenly a sack flew through the window, landed on the floor, and popped open.

"O wow, man," said Snow Purple, "where am I?"

"Right here!" said one of the pigs, Hilarity, falling into the throes of laughter at his own wit.

Snow Purple looked down, saw the pigs, and passed out.

"I say we ravish her, kill her, and dump the body!" said Lascivious, rubbing his hands together concupiscently.

"What is it?" asked Fat Head.

"A person, a girl, genus species *Homo sapiens*, or close anyway," said Perspicacious.

After the other three pigs had made their respective comments, with Anthropophagus making a particularly disgusting one about parsley, carrots, and potatoes, they settled upon Rapacity's plan to pickpocket her, steal her fake jewels which the kindly villagers had bestowed upon her, and dump her off a cliff. Unfortunately, she came to. The pigs wanted to throw her out on her ear, but Indolence came up with a plan.

"If we allow you to stay here with us, will you do all the cooking, and keep house for us?" he asked.

"O wow, fer shure I will." She had had to cook for her parents and, though she was no James Beard, she satisfied the pigs. . .with her cooking, that is.

The woodcutter heard a knock at his door. He answered it. "And a knock-knock to you

Seven Little Pigs

too."

"May I come in?" he heard.

Oh, he thought, somebody's at the door. "Sure, door's open."

The evil queen stepped in. She had heard of the woodcutter's intelligence from the villagers, so she didn't worry about trickery or evasiveness. "Hello. I'm the evil queen from the nearby capital city, Kaboo. I've come to kill your daughter." She had gained information on where Snow Purple lived from her magic mallets.

"Oh," the woodcutter replied. "Well, I'm sure glad to meet you, but she's not here anymore. Some crazy guy on a horse rode up, stuffed her in a bag and took off. I have no idea why."

"Hmmm. What a revolting development," the queen said, frowning. "Well, thanks anyway. Goodbye."

"Umf," he said, as the door slammed shut.

Once outside, the evil queen pulled her magic mallets out of her handbag. "You idiots," she whispered, "you didn't tell me that she wasn't. . ." She broke into melodic murmurings as a villager, wearing a garland of garlic 'round his neck, strode by, waving a cross at her. She resumed, leaving the village. "You didn't tell me she wasn't there anymore."

"I forgot," the mallets said malevolently.

"Well, where is she now?" the queen hissed.

"Oh, she's in a cottage that way," said the mallets, gesticulating as well as they could towards the East, "with these seven little pigs."

"Ah-ha!" the queen almost screamed. "I know where I can get someone to help me get Snow Purple."

"Hmmmm, this is the local pet store, isn't it?"

"Yes, ma'am, it is."

"You wouldn't happen to have a wolf, you know, huff, puff, and blow your house down?

"Why yes, as a matter of fact, I do," the salesman said, leading her towards the storeroom and showing her an emaciated little thing about two feet long. "Only twenty-five dollars, cheap at twice the price."

"Hmmm," the evil queen said. "I don't have the money, but let me see what I do have." She rummaged around in her bag. "You wouldn't happen to want to take a pair of magic mallets, would you?"

"No!" they screamed from within the bag.

"No thanks," said the salesman hurriedly.

"How about a thesaurus? One million entries," she said, waving it in front of his face tantalizingly.

He drew back. "I think not."

"Okay, how 'bout this magic apple? The green half is all right, but the red half is poisonous. Works every time."

"Deal. Take your wolf."

The evil queen was standing in front of the pigs' cottage. She could see Snow Purple inside. She opened the wolf's cage. "Okay, Fred." (That was the wolf.) "Do your stuff."

With that, the wolf wheezed, gasped, and bleeewww the house down. Siesta time for the piggies wasn't too pleasant that day. Satisfied, the queen rode home on the wolf and put him in the place of the prime minister. She even hired a doctor to cure him of his respiratory ailments.

At the cottage, the pigs were just pulling themselves from the wreckage of their former home. They found Snow Purple lying comatose under the refrigerator, and they put her on a pile of leaves while they rebuilt the house.

"I told you we shouldn't have built the house out of cardboard," Fat Head sneered to Indolence. A hogpile ensued. Anyway, they finally rebuilt the house and left Snow Purple on the leaves while they grumbled about her apparent inability to cook or clean up.

A week later, a handsome prince, lost, stumbled upon Snow Purple. Now he, not being too bright, thought, Hmmm. This is just like I've heard in fairy tales. Maybe if I kiss her, she'll wake up. He kissed her. She woke up.

"O wow, man, where am I?"

"Right here," said the prince, showing no signs of amusement. For, luckily, he was, as I have said, of about the same intelligence as she. They eventually found the prince's hunting party, rode back to his palace, were married, and lived stupidly ever after. ∞

An Interview With
Eric Von Klip

Illustrations by *Julian Delgado*

—conducted by Jerry V. Kramer

With their hit single, "More or Less My Own (Doggy)," Stray Men without a Flock of Big Clubs (or Leagues) has certainly joined the ranks of Duran Duran and Eurythmics. Their music is powered by unmatched synth hooks, bounding off each other in stunning patterns, woven between the erotic lament of one of modern music's newest sex symbols, Eric Von Klip. Von Klip's brooding stage presence, remarkably effortless, exudes a magnetism and mysticism which has long been sorely missed in the music world.

I found Von Klip alone in his hotel, the Shenandoah, in lower East Side Manhattan. He looked tired, was chain-smoking, and during the interview painted his hair gold. He was frank and fresh despite his apparent fatigue, and our words reappear on the next several pages exactly as they were first exchanged. Von Klip is without a doubt a musical force to be considered for the next period of time, for he is in the vanguard of the Newest Wave.

Q. Do you view your amazing popularity as any sort of a vindication for all the pain and hard work you've endured along the way to this position as virtually undisputed vanguard of the world of popular music?

A. What?

Q. Do you. . .wait. .I guess I kinda got my notes mixed up. You haven't had much pain, have you?

A. Well, in a sense. . .I mean, the convolutions whereby there was a degree of necessity for all that of which I've gone ahead and had the endurance—speaking in rather an abstract way, you've gotta realize—to accomplish can by no means be separated from what I pretty much consider my heritage. Heritage, you know, in terms of all elements ranging from pre-natal care to, you know, my recent alienation as a result of my wife's disassociation with myself. No, really, I'd have to say that pain, the whole spectrum of it, has pretty much lent a certain poetic motivation, a credence, to what I've done, musically.

Q. O.K. Now I'm sure you've been asked before: do you consider yourself as emotionally based as, for instance, Jagger or Morrison?

A. Jagger. . .yeah. She was married to a singer for a while, wasn't she? Nice lady. Very classy. Now Morrison though. . .Morrison; Van Morrison? Naw, I've always really felt his music to be pretty straightforward, what I remember of it. . .or is that Ray Orbison? Anyway, I don't know why you brought them up, but I think comparatively my life's had a hell of a lot more pain than Orbison's. I don't think he's ever even had to suffer being the crux of a *People* exposé.

Q. Yes. A *People* exposé. You had to suffer that last year, did you not?

A. Oh hell, yes. God. It's just so irritating, you know, having all kinds of letters in my face because of what some _____ chooses to write about me, I mean, my means of entertainment are my business, don't you think?

Q. Well, in that article it seems the writer did choose to rather exploit certain elements of your lifestyle—I remember the public concern with the treatment of your pets—you do think that presented you unfairly?

A. Certainly. It focused on my relationships, for instance, besides my wife, which I hardly feel needed to be dealt with, especially as the article was a surprise to her.

Q. You've just been separated from your wife?

A. Well, it seemed to the both of us, being rather in a situation wherein I was working as much as I was, and she wanting to pursue her own career and the like, and spending so much time with herself and not with me, which is at least partly cause I'm always out touring with the band, and what with us both sleeping around quite as much as we do—which I want you to know I think is great—it seemed, what with everything like that, that some sort of readjustment was needed, and oh, yeah, then I couldn't remember her name one day—it seemed like a time for a reconsideration. Yeah, well, so it's a temporary deal, might be anyway. But yes, anyway.

Q. So the band's success has brought along, I gather, a lot of pressure? How's that success feel?

A. Awright. I'll tell ya, it's pretty much taken me by surprise. The other guys—Ray and John and Robby too. I mean, none of us plays anything, instruments or nuthin', so I guess a lot of the emphasis, I mean, the focus of our group, of our image, has gotta go in large part to its success, or rather, I mean the *focus* is *on* the visuals, on the appearance. We were just hanging out one day, and there was this accident—I'm sure you've heard this—and it had this certain sound, so Ray, he laughs, and tries to make a sound like it, kinda like "AURGH-GRTCH," and I said, or really kinda sang, "Ooo yeah catsoup," and, hell, if that wasn't the start, I swear.

Q. You have relatively little musical training, then. So do you really have any grounds to defend the critical charges that your singing. . .isn't very good?

A. I feel it's much more in the poetic vision, you know, than the realization in any standardized musical sense. Besides, my clothes are really nice. Can I ask you something? Why do people, when they write about us, keep saying I'm the "new Lizard King"? What the hell kind of an insult is that? But my

singing. . .I don't know. I mean, I was offered money to get out of the church choir when I was thirteen, but, again, I think modern music is much more hinged in the presentation of a sort of poetic, some say quasi- or pseudo-poetic, vision, and certainly the clothes. I think music audiences have grown far more open towards its forms—I think what you're seeing more and more in music is a departure from its superficial aural elements. What do "quasi" and "pseudo" mean?

Q. So it's your opinion that music and its audience, at least on the "popular" level, are becoming, in a sense, more intelligent?

A. Oh certainly. That's obvious in the use of synthesizers and other electrical treatments, which depart from so much emotion. I think music has gone way beyond feeling or thinking. Like in our band, we've got a lot of songs where Ray and John only have to press one button, and Robby beats a stick, and if they forget what to do next, or I forget the word [sic], we can just pipe it through the loudspeaker. Not that there isn't, you know, art. Sometimes we have two or three buttons.

Q. That's true. Now as you mentioned, you've been compared to Jim Morrison. Seriously, what do you think that means?

A. Lookit, I'm serious. I dunno who he is. When did I mention him?

Q. What about your general influences? Blues, for instance.

A. Ah, the blues. Yes, I've had blues. I think a good deal of music grows out of the blues. Seriously, your mood affects a lot of the clothes you feel like wearing or the tune you want to make. I mean, say you're in a good mood, it's generally more prone to make you press a key on the piano-thingy up on this part, the high part, and when you're, like you said, blue, you're a lot more likely to press a low key, 'cause the lower ones go "boouung" which is depressing and the higher ones go "png" which is more like kind of a poetic presentation of a summer type emotion. Is that what you meant? I mean, a beach song would go "png png png ang," with some lyrics like "The sand, the sand, escape injustice in a band" or something, while a song like "My wench has left, yeah I'm bereft, uhu uhu uhu" would *have* to go "Byoung byouung bong." Yeah, blues have an influence, sure.

Q. With that understood as a general agreement, then, what would you cite as your *primary* musical influences?

A. Well, I truly had no musical influences, none—which I guess [he laughs] could be called an influence in itself. I mean, not what a lot of people call music. Well, though, I guess the theme to *Star Trek* shaped me to a degree. The important thing is that music goes beyond its forms. It's really more a kind of poetic expression, or expression of poetry than anything. I mean, music is more evocative, more a poetic—well, you know.

Q. Moving on here, what do you think of music's role, politically and socially?

A. Politically. . .hmmm. Now seriously, do you think music plays a political role? I mean, I think that's where music goes wrong, when it's more than a kind of, you know, poetic evocative expression. I mean, when it starts to contain or create assumptions or ideas. Don't you think? I mean, sometimes saying political things is great, as long as you don't really give a damn about them. . .you know? Some good groups do that. We did that once—something about "no nukes no nukes no nukes, puking nukes pukes." It sold pretty good in Great Britain, but I sure didn't mean any harm. I just couldn't come up with another rhyme for "pukes."

Q. And socially?

A. Well, that's different than politics, that's for sure. I think music allows for social movement, like, you can pick up a girl or get it from her, you know, when the tunes are right. Oh gad! Lookit my hair!

Q. Ah, yes, your hair. Would you like to say something about your movie? It's rumored you don't do your own singing for that.

A. Umm, that's true. I couldn't hit this note, see, and—it was a really bad note, really was—and so they brought in a guy to finish that up. Not really that important, you know. I mean, that movie's not really about singing anyway. I think I did a fine job on my line.

Q. Your line? Which line?

A. Well, really, my only one. See, I had some real trouble with the others, so they brought some guy in to finish that up too. But they used my clothes. I mean, it's just like I was in the picture.

Q. Certainly.

A. I don't know. Maybe I should have insisted on doing another bit or something, but hell, movies aren't my life. I'm really here for the music. You know, to promote the existence of music as a form, something integral to the human experience, and I feel I've been real fortunate in doing that. I mean, the whole band has. It's really been so great, me and Ray and John and Robby all think so, to have our visions heard. It's great to get the attention, 'cause I really enjoy it. And I couldn't stand the Majik Market I was working at. I don't know. I like the praise.

Q. So the future looks good?

A. Yeah. Right now, we don't have much planned. I mean, finish up the tour, of course, and *right now*, I mean in the immediate future, play the Central Park show. Gad—that's only an hour away. I wanna do another film. I'd love to work with Soft Cell on some sort of collaboration. I don't know. I think Ray's gonna marry his ex-wife or something, or else he's going to do a film with her. Hell, I don't know. Lookit, I'm sorry, but I really gotta go. I don't even know what I'm wearing tonight, so I gotta call Bruce (Rodgers) and then get this crap out of my hair. Or maybe I'll leave it in. Whatta you think is more expressive? ∞

Mixed Medium by *John Clavijo*

Executive Futility

The sheltered adults
teem around in their three-piece armor,
jousting 8½" x 11" swords at each other.
They work for parchment
all their life.
What is their cause?
Where is their standard?

Cole Ollinger

Conversation (With Myself)

Golly, if love isn't
like it is in
fairy tales,
then I am not
a princess
and you are
not a knight
in shining
armor
And
if people don't
live happily ever
after
and casual sex
is all the rage,
then where do
romantics go in
this day and age?
And
if women are supposed
to be independent
and men are to
be macho yet
sensitive,
then who's supposed to
cry to whom?
And
if the white picket
fence is all a myth
and nuclear
holocaust is certain,
if
we don't stop calculating
our precise relationships,
then maybe for once
it won't be for certain
or assured of who's
taking and who's giving.
It'll just be two people
who are simply living.

(this is reality, remember?)

(check it out, no long blonde hair)

(ever heard of a knight wearing Nikes?)

(divorce rates spiral upward)

(so says *Cosmopolitan*)

(working women don't need love, just a paycheck)

(everyone hates a fag)

(the American Dream)

(Planned Parenthood)
(there's that old first time. . .)

(I gave at the door)

Kelly Clark

Beauty Drug

—Ed Delgado

Mothers always think their children are beautiful. They have to. But Marla Bosiasin had realized the truth about herself a long time ago. Regardless of what her mother said, Marla knew she was ugly. And fat. But she was nice, real nice, though no one ever found out because Marla was very shy and insecure, staying by herself most of the time.

Upon reaching her twentieth birthday, Marla made her move away from home to the "big city." She still loved her parents very much, but this was something she had to do. For she had a dream: to raise money by working as a poet, an area in which she was very proficient, so she could afford the plastic surgery and operations necessary to make her slim and beautiful.

Things were not going at all well. Marla could never muster up enough courage to sign her name to her poetry, much less go to job interviews. As it was, Marla was surviving on the last of her life savings. She soon would have to return home, the same ugly and fat Marla as before. Fighting back tears, she searched for tissue paper. Instead, she found an unopened letter. It was plain and bore no return address. Her curiosity aroused, she tore it open. Inside there was a little card that read

TECHNOLOGY IS CHANGING EVERY DAY. NEW BREAKTHROUGHS ARE MADE DAILY BY AMBITIOUS SCIENTIFIC CORPORATIONS. JUST RECENTLY, A NEW BREAKTHROUGH WAS MADE IN ACHIEVING PHYSICAL BEAUTY. THE PROCESS IS SIMPLE AND INVOLVES NO WORK, SWEAT, OR SACRIFICE. DUE TO THE HUMANE NATURE OF THE SPONSORS, THIS OFFER IS ONLY BEING MADE TO THOSE INDIVIDUALS THAT WOULD BENEFIT THE MOST, SUCH AS YOURSELF. IF YOU ARE INTERESTED IN FINDING OUT MORE. . .

An address was then given. Marla was there the next night.

The building was a cold gray construction which had no windows and only one door. Entering by this door, Marla was stopped dead in her tracks by a cold metallic voice. "YOUR INVITATION, PLEASE."

The source of the voice was a console, much resembling the money withdrawal machines at banks, embedded in the far wall. Marla, relieved that it wasn't a human receptionist, placed her card in the appropriate slot.

An appendage slowly came out of the console. It resembled an oculist's tool. Marla was asked to place her eyes level with the light from the tool, which she did. She also complied by putting her hand on a metal sensor as instructed.

What followed was a series of questions mostly about her life and background. Marla answered all without hesitation until she was asked, "Does anyone know you have come here?"

For some reason the question bothered Marla; but convincing herself it was in the interest of the humane sponsor, she answered, "No."

After a momentary whir the voice said, "Thank you for completing the retinal scan, 348-27-389, Bosiasin, Marla. Proceed into the reception area."

Marla found herself in a small theater. It was full of people. Ugly people, fat people, people like herself. Marla glanced uneasily

Colored Pencil by *Catherine Young*

around and took a seat towards the back. Before she had a chance to consider leaving, the lights dimmed. A movie began, a short documentary on the history of plastic surgery and the like, graphically depicted. Then came a startling demonstration. An ugly, revoltingly fat woman was shown, her grossness painfully exploited. An unseen scientist gave her an injection of jet black liquid. In a matter of seconds she was transformed in a flash of blinding white light to an angelic beauty. The picture froze on her divine face. Her former face was shown for contrast. A gentle voice began to explain that the beauty drug was now being offered free of charge or obligation to those in the room. But due to limitations in the drug supply, only one of the people in the room could be treated that day. To avoid any controversy, all those who were interested were asked to wait in individual waiting rooms. He then assured them that the drug had been sanctioned by innumerable authorities but was not announced publicly for reasons hence given. He then wished them all luck and faded away.

The room lit up, and Marla joined the group without hesitation in moving toward the waiting rooms. The transformation she had just witnessed stood out in her mind, overshadowing all other thoughts. She failed to notice that no one had stayed behind.

The waiting rooms were comfortable. There was a bed and a couch. There was even an exercise machine in case she got restless. The fact that there were an unusual number of windows and a water bottle hanging upside down with a spout in the corner was totally missed by Marla's excited mind. She suddenly felt the impulse to sleep and, as she lay down on the bed, she thought, That's funny. I wasn't tired before.

Marla was awakened some time later (she didn't know when) by an elderly scientist wearing very dark glasses. Marla was overjoyed to find out that she had been chosen for the drug. As she passed the closed doors of the others' waiting rooms, Marla felt no remorse; she didn't even think about them.

Led into a dark, circular room, Marla saw that there were people about nine feet up in the shadows watching her. They must be the sponsors, Marla thought. She felt secure as long as she didn't see their faces. There were five other scientists in the immediate area around her, all of them wearing those dark sunglasses, though it was dark in the room. But Marla didn't think about this either; she was about to be beautiful.

Photograph by *Thomas Peters*

One scientist approached her with the syringe full of jet black liquid. Marla grimaced as the liquid coursed into her bloodstream. She was soon surrounded by an intense white light, and she was surprised to notice that she was the source of the light. Her fat body seemed to melt away into a firm, beautiful, yes, perfect body! Her ugly face was torn away, replaced by a smooth, gorgeous visage of an angel! An angel? No, a goddess, a divine goddess of all that is beautiful. The little underlings which had provided her with the means to this beauty watched her with interest, taking notes, taking photographs, watching their clocks.

Then it was over. As quickly as the beauty had come, it began to fade, boiling away her skin and consuming her in an internal fire. What had once been Marla Bosiasin collapsed into herself (itself?) like a white star becoming a black hole. Soon there was nothing left of her (it) except the verbal resonance of her screaming. Strangely enough, her (its) dying thoughts were not of betrayal, but rather this: "At least I don't have to be ugly anymore."

One scientist checked his watch and announced, "1.57 seconds from inception to destruction. That is up .23 seconds from the last one. Send in the next volunteer."

Frank Herbert Smith entered the room, thinking he was lucky that he was the only one chosen from the large group for this great new drug. ∞

Exam Week

Lenin, in
Cementing control,
(so blond-on-blue)
Tried to get eco-
(you are, of)
Nomic control as
(flax-on-robinseggshells)
A base for
Political control,
But the peasants
(an arctic wolf you are)
Would not let him
(surrounded with a
pipesmoke haze)
Collectivize. Stalin
Succeeded in
(go away, wolf, I want
my mind back)
Collectivization, but
This resulted in
(blond-on-blue)
Riots and massacres.

Jeannine Marlar

Audio/Visual

Insert cassette
Push button: "Play"
Stand back and watch
This brand "new" day

Feel your sorrow
Heed the pain
Watch my eyes
Fill up again

Fight the fact:
Time hasn't replaced
The memory that
Won't be erased

Contort my features
In twisted shape
Stop cassette
Rewind the tape

Laura Richardson

An Agent of Selection

Should age make one determined?
Does the passage of time spawn a creature of mechanistic prediction?

Does one become like his convenience the way people resemble their house pets after years of caring cohabitation?

Are these wrinkles appearing on my face like to numbers on a clock?
Do my daily comings and goings resemble the tiresome repetitions of pistons and valves?
Is my speech as the monotonous droning of a heater or an air conditioner?
Have my innermost thoughts become like the dull throbbings of a washing machine, purging my past of the soil of experience?

I was told not to build walls,
not to construct barriers but
to let reality have its way
and the world its input.
The data of determinism entered,
and my only feedback was a
sterile response to an
artificial stimulus.

A machine cannot protest itself.
It is at the mercy of hostile elements and the whims of wrenches.

I am not a machine. I select. I posit and I propose.
I choose and I deny. I will build a wall but with one door and one window. . .at my selection!

Mimmo

Pen and Ink by *Ed Delgado*

Chalk by *Catherine Young*

38

I'll Be Much Better

The pressure is building,
I can't take any more.
These weights on my shoulders
Have me down to the floor.

There's no way out
And no end in sight
But to pull up the covers,
Turn off the light.

I hate to give up,
It's the coward's way, free.
But I hate the world too
And what it's done to me.

I'll slip away in the night,
Most won't know I'm gone.
I won't change the game,
I'm only a pawn.

No need to worry,
I'll be quite all right—
Probably much better,
Gone in the night.

Georgia Sattele

Death By Male

The letter lay, pale and unopened.
She, also closed, picked it up,
weighing it in her hand,
and with the shining blade of
the letter opener
cut across the thin blue lines
of her wrist.
With fumbling fingers, bloodspotted
pearly nails,
she slid the letter out
of the envelope, white,
and read.
He was coming—after all.
It didn't matter.
She wouldn't be there
to greet him.
Only an official letter
would arrive.
Death by male.

Kelly Clark

Ex Post Facto

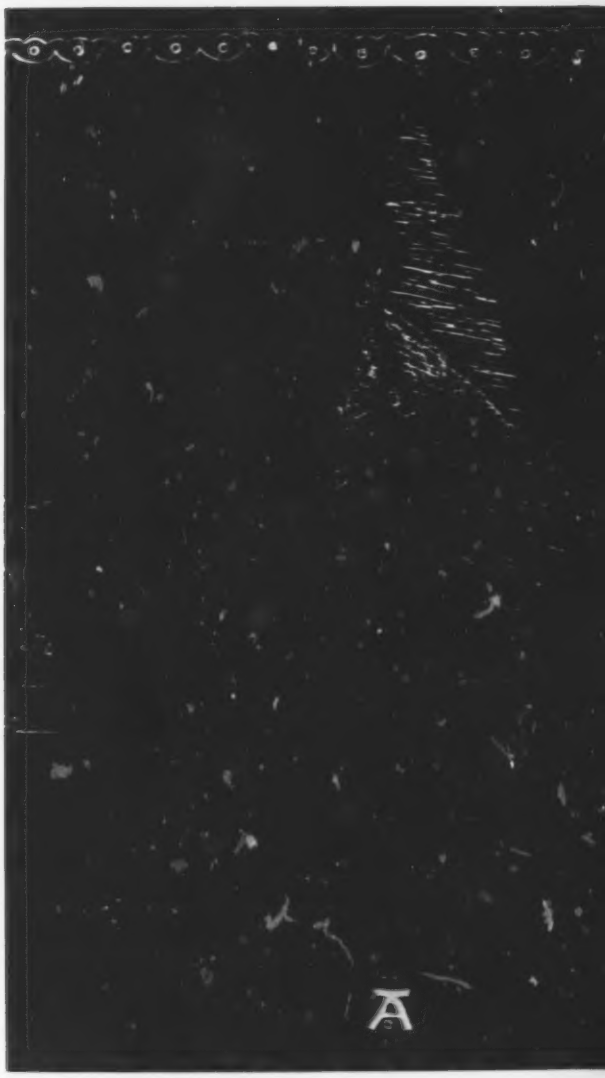
Light means more
    to one without sight
Darkness is harder
    for those accustomed to light
Presence, most felt
    when absence is strong—
Love, never expressed
    till its object is gone.

Laurie Joseph

Rage

White mutated eyes,
a contorted image,
an animalistic scream
from an agonized soul,
all sense lost.
Self-immolation prevails,
a pitiful beast.
Hate didn't do this.
No. Love did.
Love did.

Ed Delgado



Scratch Board Reproduction by *Kevin Richardson*

The Visitor

Hello, my friend,
you've come again
to visit me while I sleep.
I know it's a dream
of silent screams,
but reality's scars are long and deep.
Once before
you came to my door
to lure me from my lair
To a mystic place
that has no face,
whose ground was cold and bare.
On a dead tree limb
I began to swim
to the heaven, the moon, and the stars.
The sun rose,
but morning froze
and life still left its scars.

Mike Torino

1983

Castles,
Knights in shining armor,
Damsels in distress,
Dragons, luminous and foreboding:
The Gothic novel.
Close the book,
And chivalry is dead.

Laura Richardson

Mr. Asia

—Ed Delgado

Poor little Franklin Pierce Smith. He lay in his hospital room, a vegetable, a mental zero. By some freak of nature, Franklin Pierce Smith had survived the hell of his childbirth. He had been born a vegetable, would grow up a vegetable, and would die. . .a vegetable. But his parents kept him alive through various machines and devices. They did this, of course, because they loved him.

One day, a day like every other day in the boring life (existence) of Franklin Pierce Smith, he lay in his bed, spittle running from his mouth. His eyes saw, but did not understand, the brilliant light which suddenly filled his room. A dark silhouette of a man, seeming to be part of and yet apart from the light, appeared in the room. Franklin Pierce Smith raised his head and cooed happily as he reached into the light. It was the first independent action that he had ever made. Ironically, it was also the last because the instant that Franklin Pierce touched the silhouette of the man, he ceased to function. To be perfectly blunt, he died.

From that day forward, reports flooded the media of occurrences similar to that of Franklin Pierce Smith. All the cases involved a helpless and hopeless person and the mysterious shape of a man who appeared to them. At first, only the totally incapacitated were dying (killed?); then the old began to meet similar fates. What confused the authorities most was the fact that all of those who were dead had one macabre similarity: a twisted smile, a throttled laugh.

Then one day a man in Oak Grove, Illinois, announced that he had been visited by the silhouetted mysterious man (thing?) and had declined the opportunity to die. He was very humble about the whole thing, explaining that death was purely optional. But what really excited the world was that a name was given to the mysterious man: "Mr. Asia."

Mr. Asia. The name threw the world into confusion. What did it mean? The answer seemed apparent when Mr. Asia "visited" Cambodia and left millions of the starving strewn across the streets. All dead, all smiling.

But the theory that his name came from the fact that he had "visited" the continent of Asia proved rather quickly to be unacceptable. Mr. Asia was not confined to any one continent or hemisphere; he visited the whole world. Not one drop of blood was spilled, no violence anywhere. Just death, and smiles.

Logan Sudura lay in his hospital bed dying from cancer. Logan had been 6'2" and weighed 250 pounds up until a few months ago. Now he couldn't even stand up and weighed as much as his little daughter. Logan was kept alive by doctors who said that killing him would be "inhuman"; so they let this shadow of a man wither away in shame and agony.

Logan watched the development of Mr. Asia from his bed with particular interest. As the panic grew, the staff of the hospital grew more and more paranoid. They barricaded the hospital against attack from without (as if anything could keep Mr. Asia out). As the paranoia increased further, the hospital staff sealed all windows and cut off all communication with the outside world such as news and TV.

Without any diversion, Logan had nothing to do except lie in bed thinking of death and Mr. Asia, both of which were the same to him.

A strange stirring in the air told Logan that Mr. Asia had finally come. Logan painfully twisted his head to look at the dark silhouette in the blinding light. Logan thought he saw a smile on (what seemed to be) Mr. Asia's face, but it was impossible to tell. Mr. Asia spoke:

"DO YOU WISH TO COME WITH ME, LOGAN SUDURA?"

The voice had an authoritarian tone with a comforting quality.

"Yes," Logan answered. "But may I ask you a question first?"

"CERTAINLY."

"Is your first name Euthan?"

Euthan Asia laughed, and they ran off together. ∞

Sacred and Profane

The echo of footsteps on a stone path interrupts a monastic silence.
The light rain weighs down the tired, curled leaves so that the wind can rip them from their home, the bough.
The gothic arches of the cloister appear endless. They lead to a dark stone tunnel, the life of solitary sanctity.
The steeples with their gilded crosses mock the world.
They are seen from dingy rooms of sensuality, from drawing rooms of enlightened hypocrites, from the sickrooms of decaying mortality.
The bells offer comfort and peace. They cry out to lives adrift on a stormy sea.
The chant is a monotonous melody drifting through the courtyard, stopping at the walls lest it mingle with the complicated and become lost in the mundane racket of profaned clatter.
"In God alone be at rest, my soul. . .Gloria Patri et Filii et Spiritu Sancti". . .the monk has finished his Opus Dei and will return to as much of the world as is fitting.
The courtyard is empty. The silent figure of St. Benedict stands somberly over his ruled world, always reminding his monks that only their stone-like spirituality can withstand the winds of sinful division.

Mimmo

Truth

I

Truth
How I've searched for it
How I've longed for it
and
now
How much more elusive it is.

II

I didn't
find truth
in excesses
nor
in abstinence
nor
in moderation

Truth won't be measured.

III

I beg for its finality
for
truth's security
for
its unending knowledge
for
its refuge
at the end of the journey.

IV

Truth
is out there
and
This empty seeker
Can tell where it's not
which
is
exactly where it is.

V

Truth
can only be found
in that
almost undistinguishable gap
That finite void
That infinitesimal hiatus
between
what is and
what should be
and
which no mortal will ever enter.

Cole Ollinger

Perhaps

You close the door inside you
leaving little room for me—
Do I still have the power
to pervade your memory?
You: the stronger half of Us
who seemed invulnerable to me
And loved without my weakness
of sentimentality. . .
I: with all my dreams fulfilled
by you—with whom they dealt—
Still can't erase the impact
of everything I felt. . .
Your life and mine, intertwined,
had to come apart, and yet—
Do you ever—upon remembering—
feel some small pain of regret?
Your independence, or my dependence,
What turned "Us" to "You" and "I"
And do you ever pause to contemplate my name, and wonder. . .
Why. . .?

Laurie Joseph

Linoleum by *Ed Delgado*

Compassion

Eyes that sense the sharpened arrow of pain deep within me.
Their tranquil cerulean depths offer solace.
But in all their azure majesty they cannot dislodge the torment's source:
Eyes that sense my pain,
feeling for me, not with me.

Cole Ollinger

Air Brush and Pen by *Eric Marston*

Beastly Beauty

the thorny rose
bloodshed beneath the beauty
no one looks so deep

Belinda Walker

44

The Ex-Lovers

As the serpentine wind hissed,
fog rolled into nether-valley.
A china doll,
obscured by fine rose robes,
a white masque,
sat alone.

Suddenly, out of the fog
materialized the warrior,
obscured by metal,
a dark dragon helmet.
The serpentine wind hissed
through the scales of his shining armor.

Apathetic,
the china doll
refused to cast her hidden eyes upon his grim visage.
Almost without movement,
an object was cast before the china doll.
She withdrew in horror.

Beating weakly,
a human heart lay in the dust.
Tears falling
but not seen,
the china doll looked on the warrior,
searching for reason.

Mechanically,
the warrior removed his chest plate,
in the middle of which
was a hydraulic pump
steadily sending liquid throughout the organism.

Fog overtook the warrior.
He was gone.
The serpentine wind hissed through nether-valley,
carrying the sound of mournful wailing
and insane laughter.

Ed Delgado

Colored Pencil by *Julian Delgado*

State

In this sensuous state of surprise
beauty, like violence,
can be seen in her eyes wide,
wide open.
And above her smoldering frown
they look in complete wonder
dark, and flashing astonished
as if she can
not believe, and
will soon seduce the messenger,
fortunate Mercury,
of this disbelief.

Jerome Kramer

Backroads

—Kelly Clark

Angie filed her fingernails and took long sideways glances at the man driving the car. It felt strange to have a man there, and for a minute she had to think just to remember his name. Harry S. White. She had just been married and was on her way to Charleston for their honeymoon. They took the roundabout way, traveling the old backroads because Harry had business to attend to.

Angie White was seventeen, but she told Harry she was nineteen so it wouldn't cause any trouble. Angie looked at Harry again. He was a stout man around forty with clean features and white teeth. When he had walked into the diner, she knew he had some money 'cause of his nice suit and expensive shoes. He also had the prettiest fingers of any man she'd ever seen. Harry told her it was because he got a manicure every week. Angie laughed, never having seen a man that wasn't fancy have such clean hands. She wondered what kind of man would marry a waitress in a diner, right like that. Angie wondered and didn't trust him at first; but when he said she was the cutest thing and bought her a new outfit from Belks, she knew he was a good man who was just lonely. Angie knew a good deal when she saw it, so she up and quit her job and married Harry.

Their first night together, Harry asked her what kind of a girl she was and she had said simple. He had laughed and pulled her close and said, no, she was like him, desperate. Angie hadn't understood that, but she didn't care 'cause she was Mrs. Angela Boyles White and would become everything her mother said she wasn't.

Angie had been born in Pelion, S.C., to Ms. Martha Boyles. Her father had run off the day before the labor pains set in. Her mother said it was the relief of getting rid of that man that sent Angie into the world. Angie had never loved her mother, a bitter woman who never failed to remind anyone of the hard path she'd trod. Throughout her life, Angie sought for recognition and love to compensate for being her mother's child. She had just wanted to be loved, and she had been. Adored in high school, she found love in back seats of cars, behind the movie house, and in abandoned shanties. Angie soon found that the love she had was not what she wanted, but by then it was too late. She had a reputation.

Photograph by *Thomas Peters*

Harry and Angie had been married in a courthouse against Angie's wishes; she wanted a wedding at the big Baptist Church. She wanted to show all of Pelion that she was married and not what they said at all. Well, Angie smiled triumphantly, and grasped Harry's thick hand. She had shown everyone. Angie hugged his hand to her. Harry looked over in surprise at this sudden affection and then scowled.

She returned to looking out the window. Field after bleached field passed. The radio crackled into noisy existence occasionally, but would fade out too soon. She would be such a good wife to Harry, Angie thought. She would make him happy and loved. She tried to imagine his home in Charleston, but he had said so little about it. Anyway, she didn't want to pester him with questions. He was impatient today and gruff. He kept slapping his thigh with his rough palm.

Angie asked to go to the bathroom, and Harry pulled into the next greasy filling station. She got out and pulled her sundress down and shook out the creases. She felt the young boy at the pumps watching her walk. Angie added a little hip to her sway and smiled. Yes, she said to herself, I am beautiful and young and I belong to Mr. Harry White of Charleston. She walked into the ladies' room and carefully locked the door. Pulling out her makeup and peering into the grimy mirror, she reapplied her face. She then covered the toilet seat with tissue as her mother had taught her to do. When she was finished, Angie checked her face once more in the mirror, oddly pale in the glare of one blinking light, and pulled open the door.

Hot sun slashed her face, and a trickle of sweat ran down her back. As she turned the corner, her eyes fell on the place where the car should have been, but wasn't. It was gone, and Harry with it. She knew that he had left her. She wasn't good enough for him. Her eyes blinked, full of tears. The attendant walked over to her.

"You Angie?"

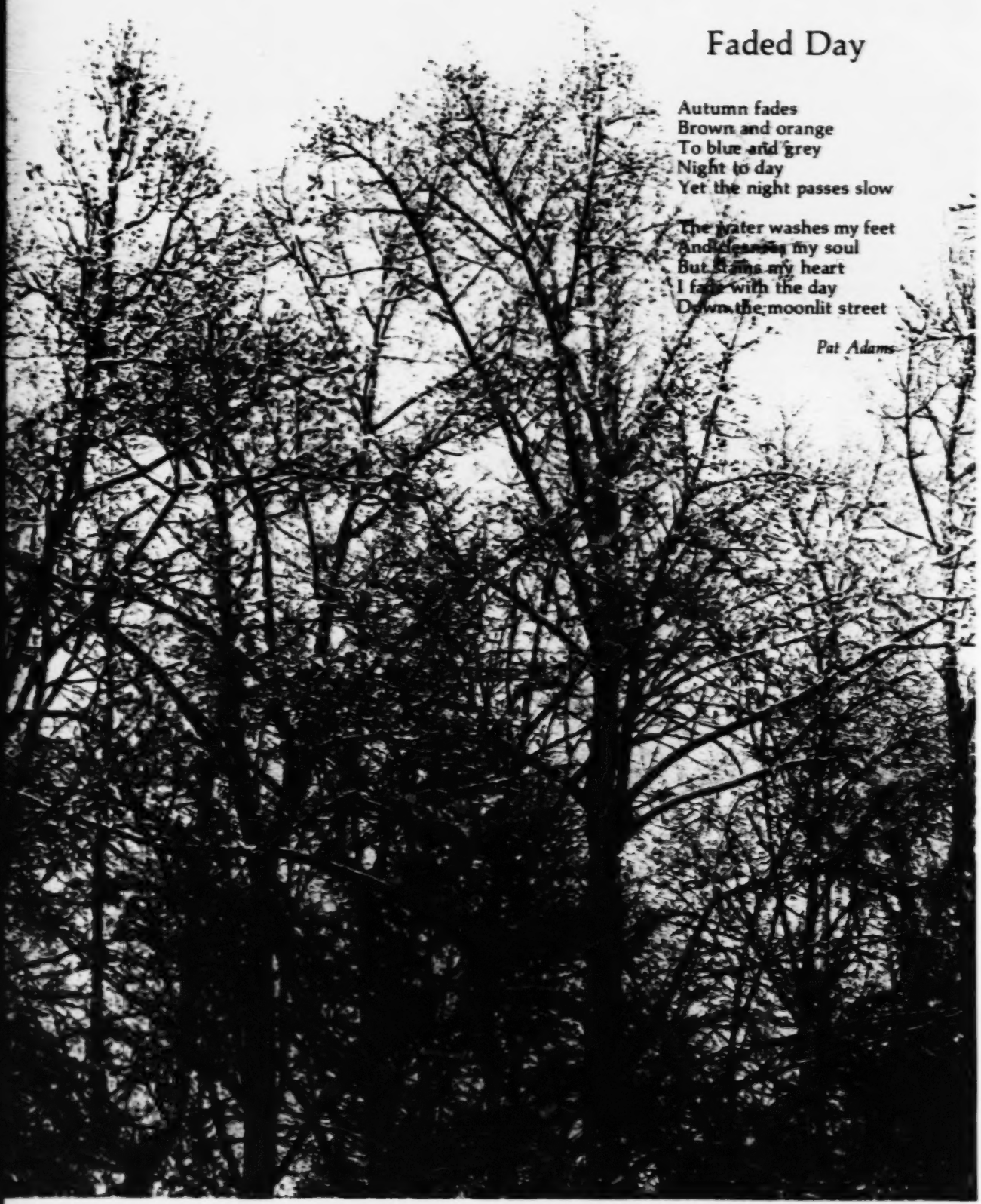
"Yes." She no longer felt like a queen, just a worn-out tramp.

"That feller left this for you." He pointed, indicating her lone suitcase. "And this." He pulled out a crumpled twenty and gave it to her, shaking his head.

"You sure are a pretty thang," he said. "I never would of let you get out of my sight." He grinned and spit tobacco juice. It splashed on her new shoes, but it didn't matter. Everything her mother had said was true: she was like her father, born of evil. Angie stood there rigidly, her face tight and drawn, sweat beading on her upper lip. She bent down to pick up her suitcase.

"You got anyplace I could sit down?" she asked with downcast eyes. "It's so, so hot here. I would just lay down and die for a cool drink!"

He nodded and smiled. She recognized a desperate, hungry look in his eyes. It takes one to know one, she thought as they went in the office and sat down. The bells on the handle jangled merrily as it swung to, and shut. ∞



Faded Day

Autumn fades
Brown and orange
To blue and grey
Night to day
Yet the night passes slow

The water washes my feet
And cleanses my soul
But stains my heart
I fade with the day
Down the moonlit street

Pat Adams

Photograph by *Michael Merkle*

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

RAGNAROC X Staff

Editor	Patrick Brisbane
Design Editor	Ed Delgado
Business Managers	Julian Delgado Kore Thompson
Promotional Manager	Daryl Gaines
Art Coordinator	Catherine Young
Copyreading Coordinator	Jeffrey Grill
Typing Coordinator	Conrad Lee Hing
Exchange Coordinator	Will Fahey
Adviser	Charleen Klister

Staff	Charamie Baxter Tres Duyos Charlotte Grayson Cheryl Hawkins Alicia Head Felicia Head Judi Mason Sean Smith Nancy Turbidy

Typeset and printed by Peachtree Printing, Inc., of Atlanta, Georgia.

PATRON
Golden Echoes

SPONSORS
BEALER Book Co.
Williamsburg Bookstore
Little Five Points Community Pub
Rupert S. LeCraw: Oxford Book Store